AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-7. (Cancelled).

8. (Currently amended) Triethanolamine ~~(TEA) obtainable by the process according to any one of Claims 1 to 7 and characterized in that the said TEA has~~ having high thermal stability over time for avoiding or reducing coloration, said triethanolamine having:

i) a degree of purity equal to or greater than 99.2% by weight;

ii) a residual content of secondary dialkanolamine of less than 2000 ppm;

iii) a sulphuric ash content of less than 300 ppm, measured according to the V.3.2.14 Standard of the European Pharmacopoeia (1994 Edition); and

iv) a colour index of less than 120 Hazens, measured according to the ASTM D 1209 Standard, after the said TEA has undergone a hot-ageing test at 140°C in an inert atmosphere for a period of 4 hours.

9. (Currently amended) ~~Triethanolamine according to~~ The triethanolamine of Claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein:

i) the degree of purity is equal to or greater than 99.5% by weight;

ii) the residual content of secondary dialkanolamine is less than 1000 ppm;

iii) the sulphuric ash content is less than 100 ppm, and

iv) the colour index is less than 80 Hazens after the said TEA has undergone the hot-ageing test at 140°C in an inert atmosphere for a period of 4 hours.

10. (Currently amended) ~~Triethanolamine according to~~ The triethanolamine of Claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein:

i) the degree of purity is equal to or greater than 99.7% by weight;

ii) the residual content of secondary dialkanolamine is less than 500 ppm;

iii) the sulphuric ash content is less than 10 ppm; and

iv) the colour index is less than 40 Hazens after the said TEA has undergone the hot-ageing test at 140°C in an inert atmosphere for a period of 4 hours.